

Do Occupational Therapy Interventions Improve Quality Of Life For Women With Breast Cancer?

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Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this activity, the participants will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the value that occupational therapy treatment has for improving quality of life for women with breast cancer
- ❖ Name quality of life (QOL) assessment measures utilized for women with breast cancer
- ❖ Discuss specific occupational therapy treatments that can improve quality of life for women with breast cancer

Background/Introduction

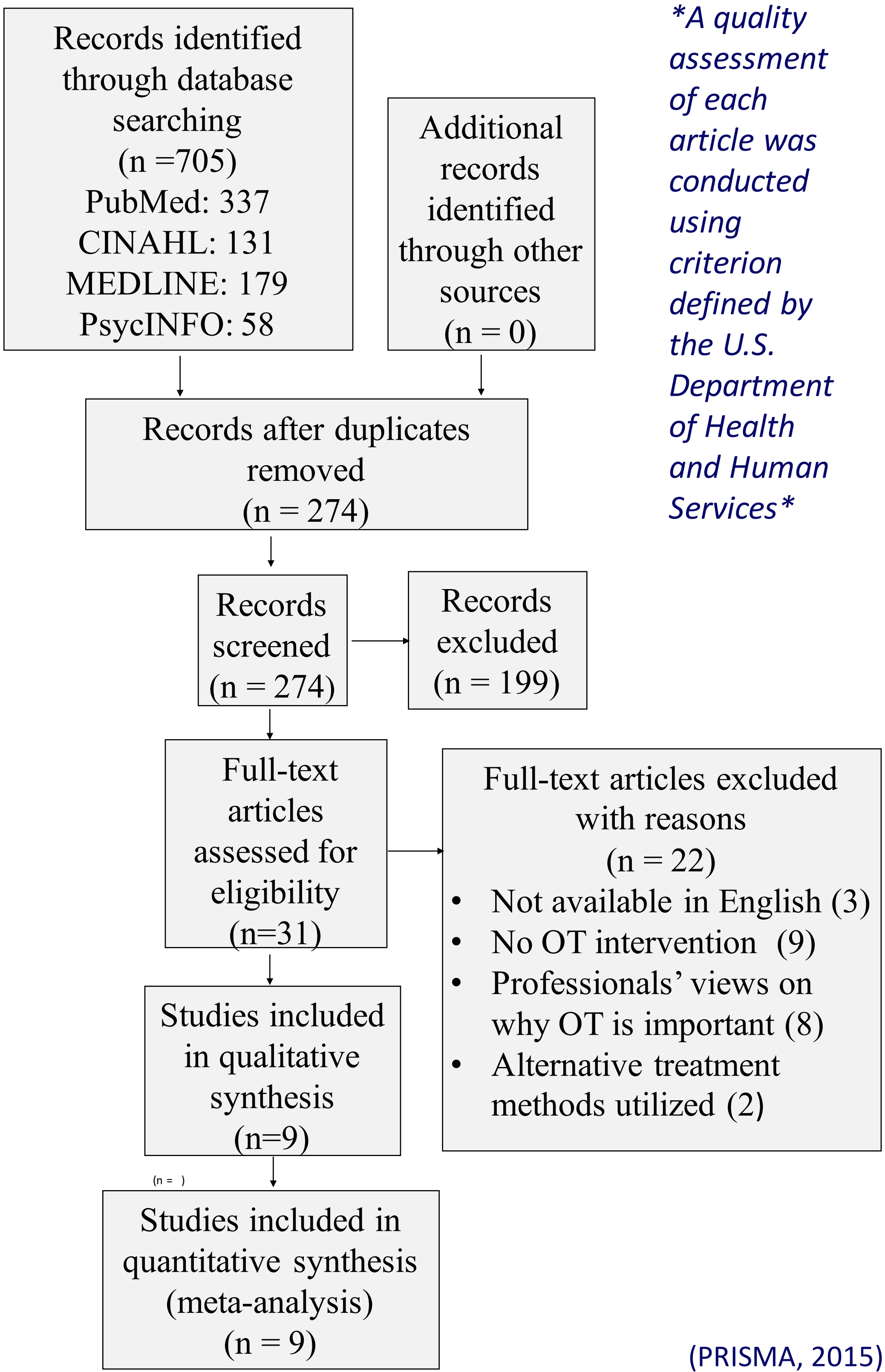
- ❖ Breast cancer is the second most common cancer worldwide and the most frequent cancer among women subsequent to skin cancer
- ❖ Approximately 30% of all new cancer diagnoses among women are breast cancer
- ❖ Breast cancer treatments can cause side effects that include pain, swelling, and tightness in the breasts, arms, and axilla
- ❖ Breast cancer is likely to take a mental toll on women due to mastectomy, anxiety, loss of role competence, and difficulty successfully engaging in daily occupations
- ❖ Difficulties that women face in response to breast cancer can impact negatively overall quality of life (QOL)
- ❖ Occupational therapy (OT) services have the potential to mitigate functional decline during and after cancer treatments
- ❖ OT services are not traditionally offered to breast cancer patients, as cancer-related functional impairments can be difficult to recognize causing referrals for occupational therapy treatment to be overlooked
- ❖ The lack of occupational therapy services in inclusive breast cancer care results in decreased preventative and long-term services
- ❖ Lack of occupational therapy services increases the risk of poor outcomes, decline in functional status and participation in occupations, and ultimately, decreased QOL

(American Cancer Society, 2020a; AOTA, 2012; Breastcancer.org, 2020; Pergolotti et al., 2016)

Methods

Search Terms	Inclusion Criteria
❖ Breast cancer and women	❖ Women
❖ Breast cancer and quality of life	❖ Breast cancer survivors
❖ Mental health and breast cancer	(stages I-IV)
❖ Rehabilitation and women’s cancer	❖ Breast cancer treatment
❖ Breast cancer and occupational therapy	❖ Occupational therapy intervention
❖ Breast cancer and fatigue management	❖ 18 years of age and older
	Exclusion Criteria
	❖ Women unable to participate in OT treatments for studies

Figure 1
PRISMA Flow Diagram



Results

Table 1
Types of Treatment Implemented

Type(s) of Treatment	Citation
Individual	Hegel et al., 2011 Mallinckrodt, et al., 2012 Khozimeh et al., 2019
Group	Maier & Mendonca, 2018; McClure et al., 2010 Petruseviciene et al., 2018 Sahin & Uyanik, 2019
Both ^	Chen et al., 2020 Newman, 2013

Table 2
Outcome Measures Used to Assess QOL

Outcome Measure & Citation
European Organization for the Research and Treatment of Cancer Quality of Life Questionnaire(EORTC QLQ-C30) (Petruseviciene et al., 2018; Sahin & Uyanik, 2019)
Functional Living Index-Cancer (Chen et al., 2020 Mallinckrodt et al., 2012)
Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-Breast Cancer Version (FACT-B) (Hegel et al., 2011)
SF-36 Health Survey-II (McClure et al., 2010)
World Health Organization Quality of Life–Brief version (WHOQOL–BREF) (Maier & Mendonca, 2018)

Table 3
Interventions, Outcomes, & Statistical Significance

Citation	Intervention	Intervention Outcomes	Statistical Significance
Hegel et al., 2011	“Problem-solving and Occupational Therapy Intervention” (PST-OT)	Increased QOL & social well-being	(p = 0.01)
Sahin & Uyanik, 2019	“Occupation-Based Problem-Solving Strategies” (OB-PSS)	Increased QOL, decreased fatigue/depression	(p < 0.01)
Khozimeh et al., 2019	Energy conservation strategies for fatigue & self-efficacy	Increased QOL, decreased fatigue levels	(p = 0.01)
Mallinckrodt et al., 2012	Social support	Increased QOL & functional performance	(p < 0.05)
Maier & Mendonca, 2018	Meaningful activity-based program	Increased QOL, performance & satisfaction	(p < 0.001)
Chen et al., 2020	Shoulder-arm exercise	Increased QOL & shoulder function	(p = 0.001)
Petruseviciene et al., 2018	OT meaningful activity community program	Increased QOL , participation, & coping strategies	(p < 0.05)
McClure et al., 2020	“Breast Cancer Recovery Program”- “From Lymphedema Onto Wellness” (FLOW)	Increased QOL participation in meaningful activities, exercise & coping strategies	(p = 0.02)
Newman, 2013	“Take Action”	Increased QOL , participation, & coping strategies	Not reported

Note. (p ≤ 0.05) was determined to be statistically significant across studies.

Discussion

Reliable QOL Assessments Used Specific to Cancer	Interventions Used to Improve QOL	Treatment Outcomes Improving QOL
❖ EORTC QLQ-C30	❖ Group interventions	❖ <i>Individual:</i> Client-centered goals, individualized routine planning, coping skills strategies
❖ Functional Living Index-Cancer	❖ Physical activity interventions	❖ <i>Group:</i> Forming connections, gathering information, giving back to others
❖ FACT-B	❖ Problem-solving interventions	

Clinical Implications

- ❖ OT practitioners can promote the benefits of group interventions by facilitating peer connections & community-based social engagement to improve QOL for women with breast cancer.
- ❖ OT practitioners can implement individual treatment for women with breast cancer to improve QOL by creating personalized, healthy, & safe routines for engagement in all areas of occupation.
- ❖ OT practitioners can implement physical activity and problem-solving interventions to increase functional performance, occupational engagement, & QOL for women with breast cancer.

Future Research

- ❖ Future studies addressing QOL for women with breast cancer would benefit from utilizing larger sample sizes and longer treatment periods to ensure reliability and validity of results.
- ❖ Research regarding this topic should be conducted in settings in addition to outpatient facilities (inpatient, home health) to enhance generalization of outcomes.
- ❖ The effects of providing individual and group treatment concurrently must be explored further to support the overall benefits of occupational therapy services for breast cancer rehabilitation.

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